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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief, FBIS

DATE: 9 August 1954

FROM : Acting Chief, Mediterranean Bureau

SUBJECT: Transfer of Primary Coverage Responsibility for Rumanian Home Service from Caversham to Mediterranean Bureau.

1. BBC at Caversham has primary coverage responsibility for the Rumanian Home Service, a responsibility predicated on its ability to hear 155 Kcs. Bucharest, in a recent reorganization, moved many of its important news and commentary programs from 155 Kcs to other frequencies, which are well received at the Mediterranean Bureau but inaudible at Caversham. The Bureau has assumed these commitments and because of seasonal reception deterioration at Caversham also all but three such programs broadcast by 155 Kcs, thus in actuality being responsible for nearly all of the coverage of this major Satellite.

2. The present Rumanian commitments coupled with basic Moldavian coverage only are themselves too great a burden for the Rumanian-English Section. Additional Moldavian, unscheduled Bucharest, or Rumanian regional coverage cannot be attempted. The T/O of the Section is three but one slot is blocked by a Kurdish-Arabic monitor, who protects Kurdish coverage, in effect processes the English programs, and helps the hard-pressed Arabic Section.

3. Therefore in order that there be adequate coverage of Rumanian Home and Regional Services and Kishinev broadcasts in Moldavian, it is recommended that:

a. One Moldavian monitor be transferred from the Rumanian-English Section to the USSR Vernacular Section, thus increasing the T/O of the latter from five to six;

b. A Rumanian be recruited to fill the vacancy in the Rumanian-English Section;

c. Contingent on a and b and BBC approval, primary coverage responsibility for the Rumanian Home Service be transferred from Caversham to the Mediterranean Bureau.

4. In order that broadcasts during the period preceding the Rumanian Party Congress scheduled for 30 October and material from the Congress itself can be fully exploited, it is requested that the above recommendation be given urgent attention.

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2. The present Rumanian commitments coupled with basic Moldavian coverage only are themselves too great a burden for the Rumanian-English Section. Additional Moldavian, unscheduled Bucharest, or Rumanian regional coverage cannot be attempted. The T/O of the Section is three but one slot is blocked by a Kurdish-Arabic monitor, who protects Kurdish coverage, in effect processes the English programs, and helps the hard-pressed Arabic Section.

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FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

Post Office Box No. 1
Kyrenia, Cyprus

9 August 1954

Mr. Alan M. Warfield, Chief
Foreign Broadcast Information Service
2430 E Street, N.W.
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Mr. Warfield:

This letter explains a little more fully the thinking behind the request that the Bureau be allowed to take over primary responsibility for the coverage of the Rumanian Home Service and that the Bureau T/O be increased. The latter seems necessary whether or not we have the complete coverage responsibility.

Considerable change has taken place in the Rumanian Home Service coverage situation. Formerly Bucharest broadcast most of its news and commentaries on 155 kcs., a frequency covered by BBC although monitorable here on a 12-month basis. Our only coverage consisted of a few programs on 854 kcs. -- unmonitorable in Caversham at any time -- and those 155 kcs programs seasonally unmonitorable at Caversham.

Since the reorganization of the Rumanian Home Service, 854 kcs. has been carrying more news and commentaries and 155 less, thus increasing our coverage. In addition just recently we assumed coverage of several 155 kcs. programs at BBC request. Rumania is also increasing the number of regional stations and their broadcast time, the latter a field that we have hardly touched as yet.

Of the twelve programs broadcast daily by the main transmitters, the two-man Rumanian-English Section is covering nine, leaving BBC with only the very important SCANTEIA editorial and two minor programs. The Bureau Rumanian-Moldavian wordage is double what it was last year. These FBIS commitments plus just the basic Kishinev programs are too great a burden for this conscientious section for any extended period. No Hungarian coverage could be undertaken, and the Unit Chief would of necessity not be able to devote enough time to his other duties.

The present T/O for the Rumanian-English Section is three, but the third slot is filled by Donikian, the Arabic-Kurdish monitor, who protects us on Kurdish and who is at present translating Arabic. Incidentally, the Arabic Section is not overstaffed as it has taken on the English broadcasts in addition to ever-growing Arabic commitments.

I recommend that:

1. One monitor from the Rumanian-English Section be transferred to the USSR Vernacular Section to handle Moldavian, thus calling for an increase of one in the USSR Vernacular Section T/O;

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2. A Rumanian be recruited to fill the vacancy in the Rumanian-English Section;

3. The Mediterranean Bureau then assume primary responsibility for the coverage of Rumanian Home and Regional Services.

There is excellent year-round reception here of the main transmitters of this major Satellite and good reception of the others for nine months. As has been proved in the past we can do a better job in intercepting unscheduled programs, a job that BBC under its set-up has never been able to do adequately. This should prove particularly valuable during the period of and preceding the Rumanian Party Congress scheduled for 30 October. The regional stations which are growing in importance could also be exploited.

If BBC should agree to our taking over this coverage, it would probably mean the freeing of one or more slots for other BBC projects.

The [redacted] family departed as scheduled on 4 August. The Bureau will 25X1 miss him as an able and conscientious Chief. Both [redacted] personnel and 25X1 Cyprus will miss the family as good friends and charming people.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
Acting Chief, Mediterranean Bureau

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